

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 01048 261001Z

47

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 /071 W
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R 260926Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6424

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 1048

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, SY, UR

SUBJECT: BAATH PARTY DELEGATION ATTENDS CPSU 25TH
CONFERENCE

1. SYRIAN PRESS ANNOUNCED BAATH PARTY ASSISTANT
SECGEN ABDULLAH AL-AHMAR DEPARTED DAMASCUS FEB. 23
IN RESPONSE TO SOVIET INVITATION TO ATTEND CPSU 25TH
CONFERENCE. AHMAR'S SPEECH TO CONFERENCE, AS REPORTED
IN LOCAL PRESS, STRESSED SYRO-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP BUT
CUT NO NEW GROUND,

2. SOVIET COUNSELOR TOLD CHARGE FEB. 25 THAT SOVIETS
HAD INVITED BOTH SYRIAN BAATH AND SYRIAN COMMUNIST
PARTIES TO SEND DELEGATIONS TO CONFERENCE, SPECIFYING
THAT BAATH DELEGATION COULD INCLUDE THREE PERSONS.
JUST BEFORE THEIR DEPARTURE, SOVIETS WERE INFORMED
THAT BAATH WOULD SEND NINE-MEMBER DELEGATION AND
THAT NEITHER CPS SECGEN BAKDASH NOR HIS DEPUTY YUSEF
FAYSAL WOULD BE PERMITTED TO LEAVE SYRIA. CPS WAS
REPRESENTED BY TWO MEMBERS OF ITS POLITBURO.

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PAGE 02 DAMASC 01048 261001Z

3. COMMENT: ISSUE OF CPS ATTENDANCE AT CPSU
CONFERENCE ONLY LATEST MANIFESTATION OF TENSIONS

WITHIN NATIONAL PROGRESSIVE FRONT BETWEEN COMMUNISTS
AND BAATHISTS. TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS WERE PLACED ON
CPS LATE DEC. 1975 (75 DAMASCUS 5160) AND LAW
ADOPTED BY PEOPLE'S COUNCIL, OVER DECLARED CPS
OPPOSITION, GRANTING MINISTER OF INTERIOR POWER TO
REFUSE ISSUANCE OF TRAVEL DOCUMENTS TO INDIVIDUALS
WITHOUT EXPLANATION, MEASURE TRANSPARENTLY AIMED AT
CPS. DIRECTOR GENERAL OF IMMIGRATION, WHO WAS
ARRESTED FOR PERMITTING SOME CPS MEMBERS TO DEPART
SYRIA DESPITE SARG RESTRICTIONS, HAS RECENTLY BEEN
RELEASED FROM DETENTION BUT HAS BEEN SUCCEEDED BY
OFFICER WITH EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN POLITICAL
BRANCH OF SECURITY SERVICE, A REFLECTION OF POSITION'S
SENSITIVITY. ALSO, WE UNDERSTAND FROM UK EMBASSY
SOURCE THAT SOME TWENTY TEACHERS HAVE BEEN DISMISSED
FROM SARG EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM FOR ALLEGED COMMUNIST
LEANINGS. PROHIBITION ON TRAVEL OF BAKDASH AND FAYSAL
EVIDENCE THAT SYRIAN BAATH INTENDS TO KEEP CONTROL OVER
SYRIA'S FOREIGN CONTACTS FIRMLY IN ITS OWN HANDS.
PELLETREAU

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NNN

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